NATION

29 booked for promoting illegal betting

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BUSINESS

Canara Bank withdraws fraud tag on Anil's loan account

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SPORTS

Amanda sinks Sabalenka, enters first Wimbledon final

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Tennis player shot dead by father in Gurugram

GURUGRAM, 10 JULY

State-level tennis player Radhika Yadav was allegedly shot dead by her father on Thursday at their Sushant Lok home in Gurugram, police said. The father has been detained, officials said. Why he did so is still being investigated. The father allegedly fired over five bullets at his daughter and she died on the spot, police sources said. *—PTI*

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Tharoor 'parrots' BJP; flays Indira for Emergency

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor has criticised the Emergency declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975, saying the people of the country responded clearly to the excesses of that period by voting her party out of power by a large margin. In an article published on the measure, which lasted between 25 June 1975 and 21 March 1977, in the Malayalam daily 'Deepika' on Thursday, he termed it "a dark chapter" in India's history and recalled Indira Gandhi's son Sanjay Gandhi's notorious acts, including forced sterilisation campaigns and the merciless demolition of slums in New Delhi.Party leader Manickam Tagore said when a colleague starts repeating BJP lines word for word, one begins to wonder whether "the bird is becoming a parrot". *—PTI*

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Govt approves Rs 1,066 cr to 6 disaster-hit states

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The Indian government has sanctioned Rs 1,066.80 crore for six states affected by floods and landslides during this year's southwest monsoon; Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced on Thursday. The funds, released under the central share of the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF), will support Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Kerala, and Uttarakhand. Assam is set to receive Rs 375.60 crore, Uttarakhand Rs 455.60 crore, Kerala Rs 153.20 crore, Manipur Rs 29.20 crore, Meghalaya Rs 30.40 crore, and Mizoram Rs 22.80 crore. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Khalistanis open fire at Kapil's cafe in Canada

SURREY, 10 JULY

A shooting incident occurred at comedian Kapil Sharma's newly opened cafe, Kap's Cafe, in Surrey, Canada, where at least nine shots were fired. Khalistani terrorist Harjit Singh Laddi has claimed responsibility for the attack, which fortunately resulted in no injuries. Eyewitness footage shows a man in a vehicle firing multiple shots at the cafe's window. Laddi, identified as one of the National Investigation Agency's most wanted terrorists, is linked to Babbar Khalsa International. Reports suggest the shooting was ordered in retaliation for a prior statement made by the comedian that offended Laddi. *—PTI*

SC lets EC revise Bihar voter rolls but questions timing

Asks EC to allow Aadhaar; Says verifying citizenship is MHA's job

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The Supreme Court on Thursday permitted the Election Commission (EC) to continue its Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar, while directing it to consider Aadhaar, Voter ID and ration cards as valid documents.

The court underlined that the right to vote is a key democratic right and called the SIR a "constitutional mandate."

The bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Joymalya Bagchi said, "We cannot stop a constitutional body from doing what it is supposed to do. Simultaneously, we will not let them do what they are not supposed to do."

Hearing over 10 petitions challenging the SIR, the bench outlined three key concerns: the EC's authority to undertake the exercise, the manner and procedure adopted, and the short timeline for the process given Bihar's elections due in November 2025.

The EC, represented by senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, assured the court that its list of 11 acceptable documents was not exhaustive. The bench, while not staying the process—since petitioners had not prayed for it—asked the EC to submit a detailed response within a week. Petitioners may file rejoinders a week thereafter. The matter will be next heard on 28 July.

Senior advocates Kapil Sibal, Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Gopal Sankaranarayanan, Vrinda Grover, and others criticised the EC's approach as arbitrary and exclusionary, particularly against those enrolled after 2003. They argued that documents like Aadhaar and Voter ID, recognised in multiple public systems, should not be excluded. Sibal cited data showing that only 2.5 per cent of Bihar's population hold passports and under 15 per cent possess matriculation certificates.

The court questioned the EC's rationale, noting that verifying citizenship is the remit of the Ministry of Home Affairs. It also expressed concern over the timing of the exercise, asking why it was initiated just months before elections instead of earlier. The EC assured that no final electoral roll would be published until the Court issues its decision. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 3 & 5

GURU POORNIMA

Buddhist monks pray at the Mahabodhi Society in Bengaluru's Gandhi Nagar on Thursday to celebrate Guru Poornima, in a homage to Lord Buddha *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

No fee hike for K'taka nursing courses

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

There will be no fee hike for nursing colleges for this academic year, the State government announced, in a stern message to private nursing varsities.

"The government will not allow any fee increase. Most nursing students come from rural and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Imposing additional fees is unjust and unacceptable," said Medical Education & Skill Development Minister Dr Sharanaprakash Patil said during a meeting with the Association of Nursing Colleges held at Vikasa Soudha on Thursday.

He rejected the association's plea to raise the fees.

He stated that the existing fee structure -- Rs 10,000 under the government quota, Rs 1 lakh under the management quota and Rs 1.4 lakh for non-Karnataka students -- will continue. "Any college charging more than the approved fee will face penalties and legal action. We will not hesitate to revoke their affiliation," he asserted. Currently, there are 611 nursing colleges in the State with around 35,000 seats. *—PTI*

HC orders notice to CM's wife in MUDA scam case

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

The Karnataka High Court has ordered a notice to be issued to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife in the alleged MUDA (Mysuru Urban Development Authority) site allocation scam. The order was passed during a hearing on an appeal filed by Siddaramaiah, challenging the Governor's approval for an investigation into the case. The court has adjourned the matter to 4 September.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), on 10 June, attached 92 MUDA sites worth approximately Rs 100 crore under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

The ED uncovered a large-scale scam involving illegal site allotments by flouting laws, government orders, and using fake or incomplete documents. It also revealed that allotment letters were backdated in some cases. Former MUDA commissioners are under scrutiny for facilitating the illegal allocations. Bribes, allegedly received in cash, bank transfers, and assets, were routed through co-operative societies and the accounts of relatives and associates of the officials involved.

These funds were reportedly used to purchase MUDA sites in the names of the officers' relatives. *—ANI*

OVER RUSSIA OIL

Don threatens to punish India with 500% tariff

WASHINGTON DC, 10 JULY

US President Donald Trump has hinted at imposing steep tariffs on India and China for continuing to purchase Russian oil. Speaking at a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, Trump said he is "strongly considering" supporting the Sanctioning Russia Act of 2025, which proposes 500 per cent tariffs on countries buying Russian-origin oil, gas, and uranium, in order to pressurise Moscow to end the Ukraine war.

Introduced in April by Senator Lindsey Graham, a close ally of Trump, the bill aims to force Russian President Vladimir Putin to negotiate an end to the Ukraine war. The legislation includes expanded sanctions on Russian businesses and officials, alongside the steep tariffs on exports from nations like India and China.

"I've got 84 co-sponsors for a Russian sanctions bill that is an economic bunker buster against China, India, and Russia," Graham said in June, expressing confidence it will pass soon. Senate Majority Leader John Thune confirmed "a lot of interest" in the bill and promised further updates this week.

The bill gives the US President authority to grant a one-time 180-day waiver to countries if deemed necessary for US national security, with ongoing discussions to permit a second waiver.

India, the world's second-largest buyer of Russian fossil fuels in May—purchasing 4.2 billion worth, 72 per cent of which was crude oil—is closely monitoring developments.

An Indian Commerce Ministry team will soon visit Washington for another round of talks on the proposed trade agreement with the US to iron out differences in sectors, such as agriculture and automobiles *—Agencies*

Can't take away rights: Bike taxi aggregators to HC

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

In a significant legal contest, bike taxi aggregators Uber India, Rapido, and OLA are appealing a State High Court ruling that upheld the State government's ban on bike taxis. OLA, represented by Senior Advocate Arun Kumar, contended that the State's decision infringes on the aggregators' fundamental right to trade under Article 19(1)(g) of the Indian Constitution.

Kumar argued that while the single judge acknowledged that motorcycles are eligible for permits, the state's policy decision to prohibit bike taxis is fundamentally flawed. He emphasised that the state cannot override provisions of the Motor Vehicles (MV) Act through executive action, contradicting statutory and constitutional protections.

"The Central government's policy allows motorcycles to be used as bike taxis, which directly opposes the state government's stance," Kumar stated. He highlighted that his application for registering a motorcycle as a transport vehicle had been disregarded and urged the court to consider that the state is not issuing carriage permits.

Furthermore, he asserted that aggregator rules permit motorcycles to operate as part of their services, and the authority to grant permits lies with the Regional Transport Authority, not the State government. —Agencies

Can't buy insulin for kid, UP man kills self on FB

LUCKNOW, 10 JULY

An Uttar Pradesh business died by suicide after a livestream on Facebook, where he said he had no money to buy insulin for his daughter. He said he was crushed under debt.

According to the police, the incident took place on Wednesday when the 36-year-old real estate businessman, Shahbaz, took his life by shooting himself with the security guard's licensed 12-bore gun inside his office.

In the Facebook video, Shahbaz appealed to celebrities and industrialists, begging them to support his family. He said he could no longer bear the pressure of outstanding debts and financial obligations.

He claimed that he was under mental distress due to a debt burden of Rs 15 crore and accused a business partner of harassing him. He said that he could not even arrange money to purchase life-saving insulin for his daughter, who suffers from diabetes.

By the time his family members, who saw the Facebook live, informed the police and reached the spot, he had already shot himself, the police said. Initial investigation said that he had been under severe financial stress and had accumulated debts running into several crores over the past few years.

Police are reportedly examining documents related to Shahbaz's financial dealings, particularly the loans he mentioned. *—Agencies*

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support

NOW UNDER ARREST

B'luru man posts pics, video of women on Insta without consent

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

A 26-year-old man was arrested in Bengaluru after a woman raised concerns on Instagram about a social media page that posted videos of women filmed without their consent in popular areas of the city like Church Street, Koramangala and other such spots.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said the government would take stringent action against such acts.

The accused, Gurdeep Singh, is a hotel management graduate from KR Puram in Bengaluru.

He was arrested by the Banashankari police following a complaint by a student, who alleged that a video of her — recorded inappropriately and without her consent — had been uploaded to one of Singh's social media handles.

Gurdeep Singh *PHOTO: PTI*

The video went viral, leading to the girl being harassed and teased, police said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Lokesh Jagalasar said the accused is currently unemployed and that legal action will be taken.

Reacting to the incident, Siddaramaiah said he was deeply pained by it.

Siddaramaiah called on society to introspect about the direction it is heading if women cannot walk freely without fear of voyeurism or harassment.

"Such acts are not only crimes but betray the values we uphold as a society," he added.

Addressing the women of the state, Siddaramaiah said, "We stand with you. Your safety and dignity are our priority, and we will act firmly against such crimes."

He also urged people to report any such videos or accounts they come across online to the cybercrime cell by calling 1930 or visiting cybercrime.gov.in.

"Let us work together to build a Karnataka where every woman feels safe, respected, and free," he added. *—PTI*

India tops list of richest immigrants in the US: Forbes

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

India now leads as the top country of origin for America's richest immigrants, according to Forbes. Twelve billionaires on the list were born in India, surpassing Israel and Taiwan, which each have 11.

The wealthiest Indian-American is Jay Chaudhry, CEO of cybersecurity firm Zscaler, with a net worth of USD 17.9 billion. Ranked 8th overall, Chaudhry grew up in a village in Himachal Pradesh with no electricity or running water before moving to the US in 1980. Other notable names include Vinod Khosla, Rakesh Gangwal, Romesh Wadhwani, Rajiv Jain, Kavitark Ram Shriram, Raj Sardana, David Paul, and Neerja Sethi. *—PTI*

No discussion on leadership change, says Siddaramaiah

Key ministers meet AICC President Kharge at his B'luru home

NEW DELHI/ BENGALURU, 10 JULY

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday dismissed speculation that he might be deposed, as he was meeting the Congress' top brass in the national capital.

He asserted that the Congress National General Secretary in charge of Karnataka, Randeep Singh Surjewala, has categorically ruled out any such move.

"Surjewala has clearly said there is no change in the leadership. The leadership issue is not in the discussion. When he said this, why is there speculation? He is in charge of Karnataka, and when he has said there should not be any speculation, the media is still speculating. There is no discussion about this within the party," Siddaramaiah said.

The chief minister said that the party High Command's decision was binding. "We agreed to it and conveyed the same multiple times."

Siddaramaiah said Congress National General Secretary in charge of Karnataka, Randeep Singh Surjewala, has ruled out any change of CM **PHOTO: PTI**

On questions about a potential power-sharing arrangement, Siddaramaiah said such an agreement never existed. "If such an agreement existed, I would not have said recently that I will be the CM for five years." He also wondered why there was any such rumour while he was still in the post.

"Is the CM post vacant now? Then why is there such speculation? If someone shares a personal opinion, can that be the party's decision? Kharge and Rahul Gandhi should talk about this," he said.

Meanwhile, key ministers huddled with AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge at his residence in City.

The ministers included Home Minister G Parameshwara, Law Minister HK Patil, Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre, PWD Minister Satish Jarkiholi, Social Welfare Minister HC Mahadevappa, Housing Minister BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao and Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil. —*PTI*

14-year-old girl murdered in City

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

A 14-year-old girl was murdered at her home in the Bengaluru South district, according to local police. The victim, a sixth-grade student, had stayed at home that day in Tavarekere, City, while her parents, daily wage labourers from Koppal, were working at a nearby construction site. Preliminary reports indicate that unidentified assailants entered the residence and attacked the girl with sharp weapons, resulting in multiple injuries. Her parents discovered her body upon returning home in the evening. Police have started an investigation. —*PTI*

1 dead, 1 missing as fishing boat sinks

MURDESHWAR, 10 JULY

A fisherman died and another went missing after their boat capsized in the Arabian Sea off Murdeshwar, Uttara Kannada, on Thursday morning. Two others swam to safety. The deceased has been identified as Madhav Harikant, 45, while the missing man is Venkatesh Annappa Harikant, 28. Anand Annappa Harikant and one other crew member managed to reach the shore. All four were experienced fishermen who had gone to sea in a boat owned by Janardhan Harikant, despite warnings of rough sea conditions. —*Salar News*

Hosp staff foil bid to steal newborn

RAICHUR, 10 JULY

An attempt to abduct a newborn from the government hospital in Raichur was foiled by alert attendants and visitors, police said on Thursday. In the early hours of Wednesday, a group—reportedly dressed in saris—entered the Raichur Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) and targeted the maternity ward on the fourth floor, taking advantage of sleeping attendants. One suspect, disguised as a woman, tried to flee with a newborn but was confronted and caught after a brief struggle. Two other suspects managed to escape. —*PTI*

Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board Chairman and KPCC Vice-President SE Sudheendra joined Guru Purnima celebrations at Sri Om Sai Mandir in Bidadi. The event saw performances by Rajesh Padiyar's team, Harikatha by AC Vinay Prasad Reddy. Naga Sai Baba was also present **PHOTO: SALAR NEWS**

SIGNS MOU WITH GOVT

KSOU plans free education for minority students

MYSURU, 10 JULY

Mysuru-based Karnataka State Open University (KSOU) has decided to extend free education to minority community students including Muslims along with SC/ST/OBCs students from this academic year.

Speaking to SALAR, Professor Sharanappa V Halase, Vice Chancellor of KSOU, said that KSOU has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the State Minority Welfare Department in this regard.

The department sanctioned a grant of Rs. 5 crores to provide free education in various courses of the university to six minority groups including Muslims, Sikhs, Jains and Christians. The agreement was signed on 9 July in presence of State Minority Welfare Minister BZ Zameer Ahamed Khan.

This will help 4,500 minority community students studying in KSOU starting this year, Halase said.

KSOU has also started Minority Cell to facilitate the education promotion activities of minority community students studying in the varsity apart from facilitating scholarships and other benefits provided by the government.

Interested candidates can apply both online after visiting its official website www.ksou.ac.in and offline after visiting nearest KSOU regional centres in every district.

Admissions to various more than 65 courses have already commenced for the July cycle. The last date for July cycle admission is 15 September. —*Salar News*

Man dies by suicide fearing police case; father dies of heart attack

YADGIR, 10 JULY

In Vadagera town of Yadgir district, a young man died by suicide fearing an SC/ST atrocity case against him, and upon hearing the news of his son's death, his father succumbed to a heart attack.

The issue reportedly began about a week ago with a quarrel between the deceased Mehboob, 22, and a Dalit family from Vadagera town, concerning access to Mehboob's land through their agricultural field. Elders from the community intervened and mediated the dispute through a local panchayat.

However, tensions escalated when a Dalit leader from another village allegedly threatened Mehboob that a caste atrocity case would be filed against him. Terrified that it would ruin his reputation and land him in jail, Mehboob on Wednesday by hanged himself from a tree.

Hearing the news, his father Syed Ali, 50, suffered a heart attack. Despite medical help, he could not be saved. —*Salar News*

TN cops nab 1998 Coimbatore blasts prime accused from State

CHENNAI/ BENGALURU, 10 JULY

Tamil Nadu Police have apprehended Sadiq alias Tailor Raja, a key accused in the 1998 Coimbatore serial bomb blasts case, nearly three decades after he first went into hiding.

The arrest occurred on 10 July, 2025, in the Vijayapura district in the State, following credible intelligence. Sadiq, originally from Coimbatore, had been evading capture since 1996 and is linked to several terrorism and communal murder cases across Tamil Nadu.

The 1998 bombings killed 58 people and injured over 250 when 19 explosives detonated throughout Coimbatore between 14 and 17 February. Sadiq is also implicated in other serious crimes, including a 1996 petrol bomb attack that killed a jail warden, the 1996 Sayeetha murder case, and the murder of a jailor in 1997.

The Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) of Tamil Nadu, in collaboration with the Coimbatore City Police, previously arrested other prominent fugitives, including Abubacker Siddique and Mohamed Ali, indicating a significant crackdown on long-absconding terror suspects. Chief Minister MK Stalin commended the ATS for their diligent work in enhancing the state's internal security. —*PTI/ANI*

Centre seeks financial stability for ITI Limited

Union Minister for Communication Jyotiraditya Scindia, State Minister of Medical Education and Skill development Dr Sharanaprakash Patil at the Inauguration of the Telecom Centres of Excellence at the Visvesvaraya Technological University's Visvesvaraya Research & Innovation Foundation in Bengaluru on Thursday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

- During a visit to ITI Limited, Jyotiraditya Scindia highlighted the crucial role the institution has played in the telecom revolution in India

Union Minister for Communication Jyotiraditya Scindia announced on Thursday that the Indian government is devising strategies to bolster the financial stability of Indian Telecom Industries Limited (ITI). The minister expressed the ministry's commitment to transforming ITI into a sustainable enterprise.

During a visit to ITI Limited, Scindia highlighted the crucial role the institution has played in the telecom revolution in India. He praised the company's technological advancements, which have evolved from manufacturing rotary and push-button dial phones to producing core telecom equipment, radio access networks, routers, and PCB boards.

Following a meeting with ITI officials, Scindia expressed optimism about ITI's future, stating that the company is poised to play an even more significant role in the rapidly transforming telecom landscape. When questioned about the ministry's support for modernising ITI's technology and manufacturing capabilities, he affirmed, "Yes. I believe the management of ITI must take on that responsibility."

Scindia further elaborated that the ministry's primary focus is to ensure the organisation's sustainability. "At this point in time, we are working on multiple strategies to make ITI more financially sound. I am very confident that a whole-of-government approach will help achieve that," he remarked. —*PTI*

SIX-MONTH DATA STUDIED

No spike in cardiac arrest deaths in Hassan: Report

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

An investigation into recent cases of sudden deaths and heart attacks among young individuals in Hassan district has found no abnormal increase, according to a report submitted to the State government on Thursday.

The data analysis of cardiac cases at the Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and its peripheral centres in Mysuru and Kalaburagi over the past six months also did not reveal any rising trend in cardiac-related fatalities. The number of heart attacks and deaths in the district remained consistent with previous months, it said.

PHOTO: PEXELS

The inquiry was ordered following widespread public concern and media reports about "a perceived spike in sudden cardiac deaths among young adults".

A committee was formed to examine each of the 24 deaths reported between May and June 2025 in the district, particularly among individuals aged between 14 and 45 years.

Jayadeva Institute director Dr KS Ravindranath submitted the report "Investigative Report on Recent Increase in Sudden Deaths in Young Adults in Hassan District" to State Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao.

Addressing reporters, Rao said the inquiry did not reveal any significant change in the number of heart attacks in recent months. "There has been no drastic increase. In 75 per cent of the cases, reasons for death could now be ascertained. In the remaining 25 per cent, the causes remain unknown," he said.

He noted that the absence of postmortems in all cases limited the availability of complete data.

"Of the 20 deaths, seven were under the age of 45. This needs serious attention," he added.

—*Salar News with Agencies*

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

Video of BJP MLA with 'Pak spy' Jyoti sparks row

T'PURAM, 10 JULY

The Kerala government recently came under fire for inviting Jyoti Malhotra – accused of being a "Pakistan spy" – to the state. Now, it is the turn of BJP leader V Muraleedharan, after a video of him with the Youtuber from Haryana during the inauguration of Vande Bharat Express inauguration surfaced. Defending his action, the BJP leader claimed that he was being scapegoated, even as CPI officials condemned BJP's attempts to implicate the state government in the espionage case. Malhotra was arrested on 16 May on espionage charges related to her alleged connections with a spy network targeting Indian influencers. *—Agencies*

BJP mocks Kejriwal for asking for a Nobel Prize

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

In a recent exchange, the Delhi BJP's chief Virendra Sachdeva ridiculed AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal's claim that he deserves a Nobel Prize for governance, describing it as "laughable." Sachdeva quipped that Kejriwal would win accolades if there were categories for "incompetence" and "corruption," citing alleged scams during his tenure, including the controversial renovation of the chief minister's residence dubbed "sheesh mahal." Kejriwal, speaking at the launch of the Punjabi edition of "Kejriwal Model," defended his administration, asserting that he had excelled despite significant challenges, including interference from the lieutenant governor. In response to the BJP's criticism, AAP's Saurabh Bharadwaj urged the ruling party to focus on governance instead of resorting to "name-calling". *—PTI*

I will retire in Aug 2027 with divine intervention: VP

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has revealed he plans to retire in August 2027, "subject to divine intervention," during a speech at Jawaharlal Nehru University. In a light-hearted remark, he stated, "I will retire at the right time." His term as the 14th Vice President concludes on 10 August 2027. Dhankhar, who previously served as the Governor of West Bengal before his election by the BJP-led NDA, emphasised that India's ascension as a global power should be matched by an enhancement of its intellectual and cultural history. He criticised the dismissal of indigenous insights, noting that Western constructs were treated as universal truths. *—PTI*

UP: Demolition of encroached land continues for day 3

BALRAMPUR, 10 JULY

The local administration has removed approximately 80 per cent of illegal structures on government land reportedly encroached upon by Jalaluddin, known as Chhangur Baba, the alleged mastermind behind a religious conversion racket. Eight bulldozers were deployed to clear the site, covering about an acre. The operation commenced on Tuesday. Additional Superintendent of Police Vishal Pandey confirmed that a complaint against Chhangur Baba led to the probe's initiation, validating the claims of encroachment. The Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorism Squad has detained Chhangur Baba, his associate, and two others linked to coercive conversion practices targeting vulnerable individuals. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasised that strict legal action would be taken against all involved. *—PTI*

BJP, Cong at each other's throat over SC verdict

Cong says it won, BJP asks them to focus on Bihar voters

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The Supreme Court's suggestion on Thursday that the Election Commission (EC) should allow Aadhaar cards, voter-ID cards and ration cards in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Bihar received mixed reactions from politicians.

Congress hailed it as a "relief for democracy" and a "significant advance" in the case.

Congress' KC Venugopal pointed out that the apex court will hear the case again later this month, while expressing hope that the EC will go with the court's suggestion.

Senior spokesperson of the party, Abhishek Singhvi, who is the lead counsel in the Supreme Court for eight political parties, including TMC's Mahua Moitra and the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) in the matter, said he will not elaborate on the merits of the case as it is sub-judice.

The apex court allowed the EC to continue the SIR of the electoral rolls in Bihar, calling it a 'Constitutional mandate' **PHOTO: PTI**

BJP WELCOMES RULING

Bihar Deputy CM and BJP leader hailed the SC's move as a welcome step and asserted that its implementation was necessary to ensure that only Indian citizens were enrolled. "We welcome the decision. No one interferes with the work of the EC," Chowdhary said.

The BJP said that EC's ruling is a "setback" to the opposition parties protesting the exercise and asked them to work hard to woo their voters.

BJP's national spokesperson Rajiv Pratap Rudy called the process a "Constitutional right," and said, "They should work hard enough to get (woo) their voters... rather than coming out crying that their voters are being removed."

The apex court allowed the EC to continue the SIR of the electoral rolls in Bihar, calling it a "Constitutional mandate," while posting the matter to be heard next on 28 July. *—PTI*

Men steal gold chain posing as EC official

Two men, posing as poll officers involved in the ongoing SIR in Bihar, visited the house of an elderly couple in Saran district and allegedly decamped with a gold chain on the pretext of taking it off for a photograph, police said on Thursday. *—PTI*

'BJP'S PARROT'

Shashi Tharoor criticises Cong over Emergency

T'PURAM/NEW DELHI 10 JULY

Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor criticised the Emergency declared by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975 on Thursday, saying the people of the country responded clearly to it by voting her party out of power by a large margin.

While writing for a daily, Tharoor termed Emergency "a dark chapter" in India's history and recalled Indira Gandhi's son Sanjay Gandhi's notorious acts, including forced sterilisation campaigns and the merciless demolition of slums in New Delhi.

"In poor rural areas, violence and coercion were used to meet arbitrary targets. In cities like New Delhi, thousands of people were rendered homeless," the MP wrote.

Explaining how the current India is different from the country in 1975, the Congress leader warned that the "temptation to centralise power", silence dissent, and "bypass constitutional safeguards" may reappear in various forms.

CONG' VEILED ATTACK ON THAROOR

In a veiled swipe at Congress MP Shashi Tharoor after the article, party leader Manickam Tagore on Thursday said when a colleague starts repeating BJP lines word for word, one begins to wonder whether "the bird is becoming a parrot".

After Tharoor's article in a Malayalam daily, Tagore took to X to express his opinion without taking any names.

'"When a Colleague starts repeating BJP lines word for word, you begin to wonder — is the Bird becoming a parrot? Mimicry is cute in birds, not in politics," the post from Virudhunagar MP read. *—PTI*

MDMK's Vaiko apologises for offensive remarks against press

CHENNAI/ VIRUDHUNAGAR, 10 JULY

Politicians apologising for their mistakes is almost unheard of in India. In this context, MDMK chief Durai Vaiko has done the unlikely thing on Thursday by apologising for lashing out at journalists during a meeting in Sattur, Tamil Nadu.

While Vaiko was addressing a party meeting on Wednesday, a few party workers began leaving the meeting mid-way, which was filmed by journalists who also filmed the empty chairs.

This apparently infuriated Vaiko according to a video of the meeting doing the rounds on social media. Reacting to

PHOTO: ANI

the journalists filming empty chairs, the MP used harsh and offensive language.

According to the Chennai Press Club, Vaiko further asked his party cadre to seize the journalists' recording equipment which allegedly led to party leaders attacking journalists.

Sharing a purported video of the incident, the Chennai Press Club condemned the incident. Further, it said that it was unacceptable for a senior political leader, once considered a prominent voice in democracy, to act in such a manner.

The Club also urged cops to "immediately register a case under the appropriate sections against those who committed the assault and also against Vaiko for instigating it, and to take strict action."

While expressing his apology over the incident, Vaiko said that his cordial ties with journalists is common knowledge. "I express my deepest regret to the press and media friends, both personally and on behalf of the party, for the incident," the Tiruchirappalli MP said. *– Agencies*

REUNION DELAYED?

No need of alliances for local polls: Raut

MUMBAI, 10 JULY

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut said on Thursday that arrangements like the INDIA bloc or the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) are not necessary for the upcoming local and civic body elections in Maharashtra.

Raut also said there is growing public pressure that the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) and Raj Thackeray's Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) contest the upcoming local body polls jointly. The party will take a call at the appropriate time.

"... There is no need for such alliances when it comes to civic elections," he said.

About two dozen parties from across the country are a part of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), while MVA comprises the Congress, Sena (UBT) and NCP (SP).

Elections in Maharashtra civic bodies, including the Brihanmumbai Municipal

- Raut also said the Shiv Sena (UBT) and Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) will take a decision at the appropriate time

Corporation, will likely be held later this year. Shiv Sena had controlled the BMC for nearly two decades.

Raj shared the stage with Uddhav in Mumbai at a gathering to celebrate the rollback of the state government's two resolutions, introducing Hindi as a third language from Class 1 in Maharashtra schools. *–PTI*

India map without Telangana? BRS fumes

HYDERABAD, 10 JULY

The BRS on Thursday strongly objected to Andhra Pradesh BJP chief PVN Madhav presenting a map titled "Bharata Sanskrutika Vaibhavam" (Glory of Indian Culture) to Minister Nara Lokesh in which Telangana was reportedly not visible.

BRS Working President K T Rama Rao, in a post on 'X', urged PM Modi to clarify whether the omission reflected the BJP's "political agenda or plan".

Rao said that people had fought for generations for a cultural identity, a rightful place in history, and geographical recognition for Telangana.

When contacted, Madhav told PTI that the map was a framed artistic picture with only a thin line separating Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

He also added that if the omission was a genuine oversight, the BJP leadership should apologise to the people of Telangana. *–PTI*

IAF pilot killed in Jaguar crash became a father in June

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

The two Indian Air Force (IAF) pilots who died in a crash of a Jaguar fighter jet near Churu in Rajasthan a day ago have been identified as Sqn Ldr Lokender and Flt Lt Rishi Raj Singh, officials said on Thursday.

While Squadron Leader Lokender Singh Sindhu had become a father in June and had been back on duty on 30 June, flight Lieutenant Rishi Raj Singh was fascinated by fighter planes from childhood and dreamt of becoming a fighter pilot, his family member said.

Lokender, 32, had been home for his son's birth at his hometown in Haryana where his doctor wife gave birth to a baby boy on 10 June. Lokender's sister, Anshi was a short service commissioned officer in the Air Force, while her husband is a wing-commander.

Squadron Leader Lokender Singh Sindhu and Flt Lt Rishi Raj Singh who died in the third Jaguar crash in six months **PHOTO: ANI**

Twenty-three-year-old Singh was the "pride" of his family and his parents were busy searching a suitable match and dreaming of seeing him on horseback in his 'barat' (wedding procession).

As his mortal remains were consigned to flames at his ancestral village in Rajasthan amid full military honours, the village mourning his loss called the crash the "most cruel joke of the Almighty".

This is the third such crash involving a Jaguar aircraft in the last six months. *—Agencies*

1984 anti-Sikh riots' witness testifies against Jagdish Tytler

NEW DELHI, 9 JULY

A Rouse Avenue court has recorded the testimony of a key prosecution witness regarding a video CD linked to Congress leader Jagdish Tytler in the 1984 Anti-Sikh riots case. The video, brought to public attention by former DSGMC chairperson Manjit Singh GK, allegedly features Tytler making controversial statements.

Witness Ravindra Singh Chauhan recounted a meeting with Tytler in December 2011, during which he claimed Tytler issued a veiled threat by stating he had "killed hundreds of Sikhs." Tytler purportedly discussed political ambitions, indicating he aimed to be a candidate for Chief Minister in upcoming Delhi elections.

Chauhan, who identified Tytler in court, revealed that the CD played in the courtroom contained multiple clips featuring Tytler and another individual, Abhishek Verma.

During cross-examination, the defence argued the video lacked relevance and challenged the credibility of Verma as a witness.

Chauhan firmly rejected claims that his testimony was manipulated to implicate Tytler. The court proceedings continue as the intricate details of the case unfold. *—PTI*

DESTROY AND RETREAT

Army to test gun that shoots and scoots in 85 sec

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

The Indian Army will conduct trials to assess the performance of a locally made mounted gun system (MGS) that can shoot and scoot in 85 seconds -- a capability that allows the 30-tonne weapon to swiftly relocate and evade counter-battery fire.

The army has written to the Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) Ahmednagar-based Vehicles Research and Development Establishment to make the system available for extensive trials in different terrains and weather conditions.

The MGS is a 155mm/52 calibre truck-mounted howitzer that fires six rounds in a minute and hit targets located over 45 km away.

The system, developed by DRDO, is based on the indigenous advanced towed artillery gun system (ATAGS).

The defence ministry signed two contracts worth 6,900 crore with Bharat Forge Limited and Tata Advanced Systems

Mounted Gun System (MGS), developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) **PHOTO: PTI**

Limited for 307 locally made ATAGS along with high mobility towing vehicles. The army needs 700 to 800 such guns.

The MGS, with an indigenous content up to 85 per cent, performed well during internal trials by VRDE at Balasore and Pokhran, defence sources said.

It can be rapidly deployed and matches the mobility of mechanised forces. It destroys targets and retreat before retaliatory fire occurs. *–Agencies*

HARSH, BUT MY ACTION WOKE UP FDA: GAIKWAD ON SLAP ROW

MUMBAI, 10 JULY

Shiv Sena legislator Sanjay Gaikwad on Thursday said his act of assaulting a staffer at an MLA hostel canteen for serving "stale food" may have been harsh, but it led to a swift action from the government on the food quality issue despite repeated complaints earlier.

"My action brought about the change. What I did would help all the Marathi people," the Shiv Sena leader said. A viral video footage showing the Buldhana MLA slapping and punching an employee at the Akashwani MLAs' hostel canteen in the city on Tuesday night has drawn widespread condemnation from government and opposition.

The Maharashtra Food and Drugs Administration on Wednesday evening suspended the licence of the caterer that operates the canteen, saying violations of the food safety norms were found during an inspection at the facility earlier in the day.

PHOTO: PTI

- The Maharashtra Food and Drugs Administration on Wednesday evening suspended the licence of the caterer that operates the canteen

Gaikwad said, "There were 200 to 400 complaints in the last four to five years, but the FDA did not act. FDA Minister Narhari Zirwal told me even after he asked officials to take action, there was no response. The question arises – who all are involved, and what is the nexus?" *–PTI*

Father alleges rape after M'rashtra girl found hanging

SANGLI, 10 JULY

A 16-year-old girl was found hanging at her home in Atpadi tehsil in Maharashtra's Sangli district on 7 July. Her father alleged that she had died by suicide after being raped and blackmailed by four men. The girl had confided in him the previous day, revealing that the men had harassed her and taken her to a room above a private bank where they allegedly sexually assaulted her. They reportedly filmed the act and threatened to leak the video unless she gave in to further demands. She was found dead the following morning. All four accused have been arrested under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the POCSO Act. The police are conducting an investigation. *—PTI*

Death toll in Hyd toddy tragedy reaches 4

HYDERABAD, 10 JULY

The death toll in the Hyderabad adulterated toddy tragedy has risen to four, with 37 others hospitalised, officials confirmed on Thursday. Victims fell ill after consuming toddy on 6 and 8 July in areas including Kukatpally and Balanagar. Most reported symptoms of acute gastroenteritis. Police have registered four suspicious death cases, pending post-mortem results. Viscera samples have been sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory. Thirty-one people are receiving treatment at Nizam's Institute of Medical Sciences, with six others in separate hospitals. The Excise Department arrested five individuals and sealed the toddy shops involved. Samples from the outlets were collected for chemical analysis. Investigations are underway. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Man imprisoned for inciting hatred in Delhi riots

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

A Delhi court has sentenced Lokesh Kumar Solanki to three years' imprisonment for promoting enmity and inciting public mischief during the February 2020 Delhi riots. The court ruled that Solanki had spread hateful messages targeting the Muslim community, further fuelling tensions during a volatile period. The judge said Solanki's actions were serious in nature and warranted no leniency. Solanki was convicted under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code, receiving concurrent sentences of three years and a fine of Rs 25,000 for each offence. However, the court ordered his release as he had already served over three years in custody — the maximum term prescribed under the relevant charges. *—PTI*

Gharial, sloth bear in endangered species list

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife (SCNBWL) has recommended the inclusion of gharial and sloth bear in the Centre's Species Recovery Programme of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Development of Wildlife Habitats, aimed at conserving critically endangered species and habitats. The scheme provides financial and technical support to states and Union territories for wildlife conservation. The Environment Ministry has prepared conservation strategies for the two species. Although sloth bears are not classified as critically endangered at the national level, certain localized populations are severely threatened. The gharial, found in Chambal, Yamuna, Ganga, Sharda, Girwa, Gandak, Ramganga, Mahanadi and Brahmaputra rivers remains critically endangered. *—PTI*

Bridge collapse: Unusual vibrations, alerts ignored

15 killed, operations underway to trace missing people

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

Rescue operation underway after vehicles fell into the Mahisagar River in Gujarat's Vadodara on 9 July ***PHOTO: PTI***

Officials of the Vadodara division of Gujarat's Roads & Buildings (R&B) department had received a warning in a letter about "unusual vibrations" being felt on the Mujpur-Gambhira bridge, which was in a hazardous condition.

The 43-year-old bridge collapsed near Gambhira village in Vadodara 9 July, killing 15 people, with four more bodies being recovered on Thursday.

Three people are missing and efforts are underway to locate any survivor and bodies of victims.

Harshadsinh Parmar, a Vadodara District panchayat member from Mujpur had sent the letter to R&B department in August, 2022.

The additional revenue office to the district collector had forwarded the letter, seeking a site inspection, structural scrutiny and tests, to the department's executive engineer.

The present executive engineer Nainish Nayakawala instead claimed that during inspection, no major damage was detected. The damaged bearing coat was repaired in 2024.

"The surface of the bridge developed gaps at many places through the river below was visible. The R&B department did surface repairs and closed the gaps. Unusual vibrations in the bridge were observed when heavy vehicles passed though," Parmar said.

Four similar instances of bridge collapse occurred in Gujarat since 2021, including the Morbi suspension bridge collapse in 2022, which killed 135 people.

The state government had blacklisted several firms, suspended officials and registered criminal cases in cases of fatalities.

In a suo motu PIL filed before the Gujarat High Court on the Morbi bridge collapse, the state government informed that it formulated a policy for the inspection and repair of bridges.

A team of senior officials of the R&B department will conduct a high-level investigation into the incident. *– Agencies*

WANT 'LEGITIMATE' SHARE

Punjab seeks Indus water

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

- With the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistans, efforts should be made to bring water from the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab rivers to meet the growing demand.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann has asserted that the state has no surplus water for others and demanded its legitimate share in the Indus waters.

He also mooted the idea of a Yamuna Sutlej Link (YSL) canal instead of the Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) canal.

Stating that Punjab has no surplus water to share with others, Mann asserted that a reassessment of the availability of water in the state is needed as per international norms.

Punjab's groundwater situation is grim since most of the river have dried up. It needs more water to cater to its irrigation needs.

He said with the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistans, efforts should be made to bring water from the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab rivers to meet the growing demand.

Punjab was allocated only 14.22 MAF of water from these rivers, while the remaining 60 per cent was allocated to Haryana, Delhi, and Rajasthan,

Mann said new storage dams built in the upstream of the Bhakra and Pong Dams in Himachal Pradesh could enhance the storage and regulation of western river waters.

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said that the Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) issue will be resolved soon.

Saini said this while attending a high-level meeting here on the SYL issue convened by Union Jal Shakti Minister CR Paatil. *—PTI*

SC to consider diplomatic attempts to save nurse

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The Supreme Court of India will consider a petition urging the Centre to utilise diplomatic channels in an attempt to save an Indian nurse, Nimisha Priya, who is facing imminent execution in Yemen on 16 July for murder charges. A bench comprising Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Joymalya Bagchi has scheduled a hearing for 14 July, following submissions from advocate Subhash Chandran KR, who emphasised the urgency of exploring diplomatic avenues.

Chandran highlighted that under Sharia law, the possibility of paying blood money to the family of the deceased could lead to a pardon for the Kerala nurse. Nimisha Priya, 38, from Palakkad district in Kerala, was convicted in 2017 of murdering her Yemeni business partner and sentenced to death in 2020. Her final appeal was dismissed in 2023, and she is currently incarcerated in a prison in Sana'a, the Yemeni capital.

The petition has been filed by an organisation named "Save Nimisha Priya – International Action Council," which aims to provide legal assistance to her. The plea references media reports indicating that the Yemeni administration has tentatively set 16 July as the date for her execution. *—PTI*

29 booked for promoting illegal betting

HYDERABAD, 10 JULY

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has initiated a money laundering investigation involving over two dozen renowned individuals, including Tollywood actors Vijay Deverakonda, Rana Daggubati, and Prakash Raj, alongside various social media influencers and YouTubers in Telangana. This stems from allegations against online betting platforms accused of generating illicit funds amounting to crores of rupees through illegal gambling activities.

The federal agency has taken cognisance of five FIRs registered by state police to launch its case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The investigation implicates approximately 29 celebrities, including Manchu Lakshmi, Nidhi Agarwal, Pranitha Subhash, Ananya Nagalla, and TV host Srimukhi, who are suspected of endorsing online betting applications such as Junglee Rummy and JeetWin for endorsement fees.

Some of these high-profile individuals have previously claimed ignorance regarding the function of the platforms and denied any association with illicit activities. The ED plans to record their statements in the coming days as it seeks additional FIRs and testimonies from victims deceived by these betting sites. A comprehensive investigation is underway. *—PTI*

Principal, staff held for checking girls for periods

THANE, 10 JULY

The principal and a staff member of a private school in Thane district have been arrested after it was reported that female students were made to strip for checks to determine if they were menstruating. The incident occurred at a school in Shahapur following the discovery of bloodstains in a toilet.

Parents protested at the school on Wednesday, demanding action against those involved. The student were grouped based on their responses about menstruation. Those who denied menstruating were allegedly taken to a toilet for checks by a female attendant. Eight people have been booked. *—PTI*

Rains flood Gurugram; WFH advisory HCA

HYDERABAD, 10 JULY

Heavy rainfall across parts of India has caused widespread disruption, flooding cities, damaging infrastructure, and raising river levels above danger marks.

Gurugram recorded 133 mm of rain in 12 hours, with an intense 103 mm downpour in just 90 minutes, leading to severe waterlogging and traffic gridlock. Authorities advised corporate offices to implement work-from-home on 10 July to ease congestion, while an orange alert was issued by the IMD.

In Himachal Pradesh, landslides and flash floods triggered by heavy rain and cloudbursts led to the closure of 245 roads, including a stretch of National Highway-3. The state has reported 85 deaths and damages worth Rs 740 crore since the onset of the monsoon.

In Jharkhand, the Kharkhai and Swarnarekha rivers in Jamshedpur rose above danger levels following continuous rain, prompting alerts and school closures in low-lying areas. People in East Singhbhum were asked to remain alert.

Authorities across all affected regions have issued warnings and are working to restore normalcy. *—PTI*

Hyderabad cricket body prez, 4 others held for IPL scam

HYDERABAD, 10 JULY

HDA president A Jagan Mohan Rao has denied the charges ***PHOTO: ANI***

- TThe HCA office bearers were taken into custody by the CID on Wednesday following allegations levelled against Jagan Mohan Rao and others by the Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Hyderabad Cricket Association president A Jagan Mohan Rao and four others were arrested by the Telangana CID on Thursday in connection with a case of embezzlement, police said.

Besides Jagan Mohan Rao, HCA Treasurer C Srinivas Rao, CEO Sunil Kante, and two others have been arrested, they said.

"Five have been arrested over embezzlement of funds, mismanagement, among other charges," a top police official told PTI.

The HCA office bearers were taken into custody by the CID on Wednesday following allegations levelled against Jagan Mohan Rao and others by the Sunrisers Hyderabad during the 2025 IPL season, police said.

Earlier, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy had ordered an inquiry into Sunrisers Hyderabad's plea seeking intervention of cricket governing bodies to halt the recurring "blackmailing tactics" by the HCA.

HCA, however, denied all such charges by the franchise.

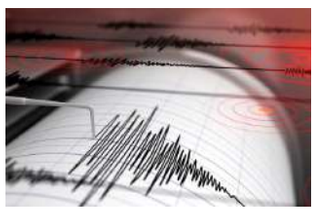
In a letter to the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and the Indian Premier League (IPL) Governing Council, Sunrisers Hyderabad alleged that the HCA was "threatening" the franchise, primarily for more complimentary tickets (free passes).

Before the match against the Lucknow Super Giants on March 27, Sunrisers Hyderabad had accused Rao of intimidation, coercion, and blackmail. They even claimed that he had even locked a corporate box hours before a match, demanding more complimentary tickets. This action allegedly violated a tri-party agreement involving SRH, HCA, and BCCI, which allocates 10% of tickets as complimentary tickets to HCA..

The franchise also appealed to the BCCI and the IPL Governing Council to intervene and address the issue. It also stated that it would consider shifting its home matches to another state if the issue persisted. However, Jagan Mohan Rao had denied all allegations, saying that no such demands were made to the franchise. *—PTI*

4.4 magnitude earthquake hits Haryana, Delhi-NCR

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY



An earthquake measuring 4.4 on the Richter scale struck near Jhajjar in Haryana on Thursday morning, sending tremors across Delhi-NCR. According to the National Centre for Seismology, the quake occurred at 9.04am, with its epicentre 3km northeast of Jhajjar and 51km west of Delhi, at a depth of 10km.

Tremors were felt in parts of Haryana including Rohtak, Gurugram, Panipat and Hisar, as well as in Meerut, Noida and Greater Noida. Panic gripped residents, many of whom rushed outside in fear, some still in nightwear. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage, but people remained outdoors. *—PTI*

RISKY AFFAIR

Man held for murdering ex-partner, infant

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

- Nikhil cleaned the knife and took it with him while leaving behind his mobile phone at the scene of the crime to avoid being traced by the police.

Police have arrested a man from Uttarakhand's Haldwani for allegedly slitting the throats of his former live-in partner Sonal Arya and her friend's six-month-old child at Majnu Ka Tila in Delhi.

Nikhil Kumar, the accused reportedly killed the infant in "revenge" as he suspected its father to have helped Arya in aborting the former's child.

Nikhil, 23, a delivery agent suspected Sonal, 22, of being influenced by her friend Rashmi Devi's husband Durgesh Kumar. She had been residing in their house for the past few months.

On 8 July the accused came to the couple's residence while they had gone to pick up their elder daughter from school. He slit Sonal and the infant's throat with a knife.

Nikhil cleaned the knife and took it with him while leaving behind his mobile at the crime scene to avoid being traced, police said.

Police sources said that Sonal and Nikhil had met in Haldwani in 2023. She became pregnant and delivered a baby in 2024, which they sold off in Uttarakhand.

They began living here together in Delhi's Wazirabad.

However, Sonal's family claimed that she had left Nikhil after being constantly abused by him. She also filed a complaint with the Delhi police after he shared her photos on social media.

The victim moved in at her sister Hema Arya's house in Aruna Nagar while their parents lived in Nainital.

Their mother, Asha Arya, said that Nikhil often called them and blamed them for his break-up with Arya. He kept harassing Sonal. *–Agencies*

Scolded over haircut, 2 students kill principal

HISAR, 10 JULY

In a shocking incident in Haryana's Hisar district, two schoolboys allegedly stabbed their principal to death after being reprimanded for not cutting their hair and failing to adhere to school discipline, police said on Thursday.

According to Hansi Superintendent of Police, Amit Yashvardhan, the minors—students at Kartar Memorial School in Bas village, Narnaund—were reportedly enraged after the principal insisted, they maintain discipline and trim their hair.

"In a fit of anger, the boys fatally attacked the principal," Yashvardhan told ANI.

The accused, both underage, have not yet been arrested.

"The children are minors and currently not in custody," a police official confirmed.

The victim's body has been sent to a hospital in Hisar for post-mortem examination, and a detailed investigation is underway. *—PTI*

HELMET ON, ACCIDENTS GONE

In a creative push for road safety, artist Basavaraj donned a helmet made from an old television set to urge two-wheeler riders to prioritise safety. The eye-catching act took place near Vidhana Soudha on Thursday, as part of a helmet awareness event held around 11.30am am near the High Court to mark Helmet Awareness Day

PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

EC's electoral roll revision has put Bihar on the edge

All voters in the state are required to sign enumeration forms, in duplicates, that come with their names, addresses and photographs printed, and return these with fresh photographs along with a valid proof of residence ***PHOTO: PTI***

The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has triggered a major political controversy in Bihar, where assembly polls are due later this year, with the opposition INDIA bloc alleging that it was designed to "benefit the ruling NDA", a charge denied by the EC that is carrying out the massive exercise.

The issue has also reached the Supreme Court, which will heard petitions on 10 July challenging the Election Commission's decision to carry out the exercise in Bihar.

Here is the explainer on the issue:

What is the Special Intensive Revision (SIR)?

The Election Commission (EC) on 24 June issued a notification to begin a door-to-door verification of Bihar's eight crore voters.

According to the process, all voters in the state are required to sign enumeration forms, in duplicates, that come with their names, addresses and photographs printed, and return these with fresh photographs along with a valid proof of residence.

However, those whose names were not in the electoral rolls of 2003, will have to provide additional documents, a feature of the SIR that has been the main bone of contention.

The objective of SIR is to ensure that the names of all eligible citizens are included in the electoral rolls so as to enable them to exercise their franchise. The last intensive revision for Bihar was conducted by the poll panel in 2003.

The exercise is being executed by 1 lakh booth-level officers (BLOs), aided by 4 lakh volunteers and thousands of booth-level agents (BLAs) nominated by political parties.

Why the political uproar?

The SIR has been under attack from the opposition INDIA bloc, which has alleged that it was designed to "benefit the ruling NDA", and that the poll panel which had allegedly helped the BJP-led coalition in Maharashtra by "adding fake voters", was now trying to "wrongfully delete" the names of many such people in Bihar who were unlikely to vote for the ruling dispensation.

The opposition INDIA bloc, led by Tejashwi Yadav and supported by CPI(ML) leader Dipankar Bhattacharya, has moved the Supreme Court against the SIR. A protest march to the EC office in Patna was led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday.

Concerns are also being voiced over a clause that states EROs "will refer cases of suspected foreign nationals to the competent authority under the Citizenship Act, 1955", which, it is feared, could be used against a large number of "unwanted" voters in the Seemanchal region bordering Nepal.

What are their key concerns:

•Targeted timing: Why is this being done only in Bihar and right before elections?

•Exclusion fears: They allege that the EC aims to delete voters unlikely to support the NDA.

•Document burden: Over 3 crore people who weren't in the 2003 rolls face a heavier documentation process.

•Youth scrutiny: Voters born after 1987 must now also furnish their parents' date and place of birth -- if their parents weren't listed in 2003.

•Unacceptable exclusions: Common documents like Aadhaar and MNREGA cards are not accepted as valid ID.

•Fears over disenfranchisement and misuse: The clause empowering Electoral Registration Officers to decide on "claims and objections" has raised an alarm, with opposition leaders fearing misuse.

What is EC's response?

The poll panel has maintained that the revision is lawful and constitutional. So far, the door-to-door process has covered 2.88 crore voters (approximately 36.5 per cent).

Ground realities: Citizens are flagging serious issues in the implementation of SIR.

"I was aghast to see that my son's address was listed as a cremation ground ('shamshaan ghat'). My daughter-in-law's address was left blank," said a resident of Muzaffarpur, who requested anonymity.

What Opposition leaders say: "Why has this exercise been ordered only in Bihar when in 2003 a similar revision of electoral rolls was undertaken for the entire country? And why just before the assembly polls? If it was so urgent, why was the work not started immediately after last year's Lok Sabha elections," RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, who leads the INDIA bloc charge in the upcoming elections, said.

His ally Dipankar Bhattacharya, the general secretary of CPI(ML) Liberation, claims that the EC has opted for a "logistical nightmare" and that it was almost impossible to complete, by 25 July, the exercise that involves more than eight crore voters, most of them living in areas that are ravaged by floods during monsoons.

Plea in apex court: The Supreme Court on Thursday will hear a batch of petitions challenging the SIR of electoral rolls in Bihar.

Several fresh pleas, including a joint petition by opposition parties -- Congress, NCP (Sharad Pawar), Shiv Sena (UBT), Samajwadi Party, JMM, CPI and CPI (ML) -- were filed in the apex court against the poll panel's decision to conduct the exercise before the state goes to polls later this year.

—PTI

SALAR

From X to ex: The CEO who handled Musk & ad battles

Linda Yaccarino ***PHOTO: X/@LINDAYACCARINO***

Linda Yaccarino has stepped down as CEO of X, formerly Twitter, after two turbulent years leading Elon Musk's social media platform.

Experts say the only surprise is that her resignation didn't come sooner. "It was clear from the start that she was being set up to fail by a limited scope as the company's chief executive," said Mike Proulx, research director at Forrester.

"In reality, Musk is and always has been at the helm of X. That made Linda CEO in title only — a very tough position, especially for someone of her calibre," he added.

Yaccarino's tenure was marked by declining ad revenues, controversial platform changes, and blurred leadership lines, with Musk continuing to drive key decisions.

Why it matters

Yaccarino was the first permanent CEO Elon Musk hired after buying the platform in 2022.

- Under her leadership, X has managed to maintain its dominance as the top social discourse app in the US, but its ads business still faces challenges.
- "When @elonmusk and I first spoke of his vision for X, I knew it would be the opportunity of a lifetime to carry out the extraordinary mission of this company," she said on X.
- Yaccarino continued that she was "grateful" to Musk "for entrusting me with the responsibility of protecting free speech, turning the company around, and transforming X into the Everything App."
- "I'm incredibly proud of the X team - the historic business turnaround we have accomplished together has been nothing short of remarkable," she said.
- Musk responded to Yaccarino's announcement with his own 5-word statement on X: "Thank you for your contributions."

Catch up quick

Yaccarino was hired in 2023 after running NBCUniversal's ad business for more than a decade. Her hiring alleviated pressure on Musk from Tesla investors who were concerned he wasn't dedicating enough time to running his electric vehicle company.

- Musk's disparaging rhetoric toward the advertising community presented Yaccarino with unique challenges. He told advertisers engaging in boycotts against his platform to "go f*** yourself" in late 2023.
- In May, eMarketer predicted that X's ad revenue will grow this year — the first time in four years — but will still only be about half of what it was in 2021, the year before Musk's takeover.

The big picture

Under Yaccarino, X introduced a slew of new product changes meant to transform the app from a social discourse platform to an "everything app" that serves multiple functions at once.

- The company introduced a new connected TV app last year. It's teaming with Visa to launch a payments platform this year.
- But X is still mostly known as a social discourse platform. Despite competition — increasingly from Meta's Threads — it's still the dominant platform for real-time conversations in the US, per Similarweb.

Earlier this year, Musk announced that xAI had acquired X in an all-stock deal.

- xAI also developed the Grok chatbot, whose technology has been integrated into some features on X. Grok has drawn criticism for promoting antisemitic tropes and offensive language. The company said Tuesday it is working to "quickly identify and update the model where training could be improved."

State of play

Once the ultimate cheerleader for Madison Avenue, Yaccarino's relationship with the advertising community shifted when she became CEO of X, then Twitter.

- Under Yaccarino, X waged a high-profile lawsuit against a major advertising industry coalition and its members, alleging the group abused its influence over marketers and ad agencies to discriminate unfairly against X, prompting an ad boycott.
- The lawsuit proved effective, in that it forced the industry's widely accepted brand safety coalition to shutter. Later, the Federal Trade Commission reportedly launched investigations into roughly a dozen ad groups similarly alleging coordinated boycotts.
- Earlier this year, a Wall Street Journal report alleged X had threatened to sue advertisers that didn't buy ads on the platform. Yaccarino slammed the report.

Yes, but

Yaccarino has proven highly resilient in the face of pressure from the marketing community. She continued to lead X for more than 18 months after a slew of high-profile marketing figures publicly urged her to step down.

- Last month, she appeared on numerous stages at the annual Cannes Lions Festival for Creativity in France, mostly to tout improvements to X's ad platform and products.
- She spoke with Serena Williams to announce a new podcast, available exclusively on X, with her sister Venus Williams.
- The podcast highlights X's push to improve its relationship with creators and sports leagues under Yaccarino. X also extended partnerships with the NFL and NBA. Creators and athletes like Khloé Kardashian and Midge Purce launched exclusive shows on the platform.

X's legal threats are part of a greater push by Yaccarino to force an ad industry reset, in the wake of a broader societal shift away from heavily moderated speech.

- In the wake of those changes, X has spearheaded a less moderated approach to free speech, one that other social platforms have since followed.
- Meta, for example, eliminated fact-checking and rolled out its version of X's Community Notes feature earlier this year

—Courtesy, Axios

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Meet Cop Shiva, a constable by day & a photographer by night

Growing up in a small village in Ramanagara, around 50 km from Bengaluru, BS Shivaraju had just one dream — to become a policeman. A 10th standard pass-out, he realised this dream when he joined the Karnataka Police as a constable, a job he cherished deeply. But life had other plans, and the uniform turned out to be just the beginning of another journey — into the world of art.

Today, Shivaraju is better known as 'Cop Shiva', a name that reflects both his past and present. His transformation from a constable to a widely recognised photographic artist is as compelling as the characters he documents through his lens. "I was posted in Bengaluru and like a magnet was drawn to 1 Shanthi Road," he recalls. The art space, founded by celebrated artist and mentor Suresh Jayaram, exposed Shivaraju to a new world, one that would redefine his life.

Jayaram saw something unique in the policeman with a camera — a deep sensitivity towards marginalised lives and cultural dualities. In a newspaper column, he described Shivaraju as someone who "carries his village in his backpack as he scouts the city for characters and events that fascinate him."

It was perhaps this rootedness, as a migrant holding on to his cultural identity, that helped Shivaraju connect with others in similar situations. His early photographic works focused on such individuals: a man who dressed daily as Tamil cinema icon MG Ramachandran, and another who impersonated Mahatma Gandhi. These subjects, each with deeply personal reasons for their daily performances, formed the basis for Shivaraju's debut series — 'I Love MGR' and 'Being Gandhi' — which brought him national recognition at platforms like the Kochi-Muziris Biennale and Serendipity Arts Festival.

Through his lens, Shivaraju explores not just performance, but identity and transformation. His series on 'Karaga Jatre', a centuries-old ritual originating in Tamil Nadu but now embedded into Bengaluru's cultural fabric, is one such example. He captures the vibrancy and devotion of this religious procession, but also its deeper meaning — how migrant communities remake tradition in new surroundings.

The success of his projects eventually compelled Shivaraju to take a bold step. He opted for voluntary retirement from the police force. "Being a cop is demanding, and I was finding it increasingly difficult to balance my artistic pursuits," he said. His decision wasn't easy, especially for his mother, Gowramma, who had raised him and his sisters doing daily-wage farm work. "She was worried at first, but she supported me anyway," said Shivaraju. "Today, she lives in a house I bought for her in Ramanagara, with a garden. And I finally get to sleep for eight hours — something I couldn't dream of while in service."

His artistic journey hit a new high in 2023, when he was selected as a fellow at Harvard University's Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute. "I never imagined that I, a 10th pass-out, would one day attend Harvard," he said with pride.

Yet, for all his international acclaim, Shivaraju's most personal and emotionally resonant project may be his latest: 'No Longer a Memory'. The series features his 69-year-old mother, Gowramma, as his co-creator and co-performer. In a studio-photo setup inspired by Pop Art aesthetics, the duo pose in elaborate costumes against backdrops of colourful, floral-printed bedsheets — a visual signature of rural India.

The idea emerged from a poignant realisation: Shivaraju had no childhood photos with his mother. "Back then, going to a studio for a family portrait was a luxury we couldn't afford," he said. What began as a personal exercise in nostalgia soon blossomed into a layered social commentary. The photographs — playful yet profound — depict scenes from village life, cultural rituals, and theatrical memories, some real and others imagined.

"My mother's father was a theatre actor, so she has performance in her blood. Even when I was little, she would play along with my dramatics after I came home from village plays," he said. Now, that shared love for storytelling has become the backbone of No Longer a Memory.

The series, which was recently exhibited as a solo show at Bengaluru's Gallery Sumukha, is now heading to the Seattle Art Fair (17–20 July), where Shivaraju is one of five Indian artists featured by the gallery. The work resonates not just for its visual charm, but for its heartfelt homage to memory, migration, and maternal bonds.

"I wanted to show the world how we lived in Ramanagara," said Shivaraju. "Like elsewhere in India, the secular fabric that held us together is fraying. This work is a way to document what we are in danger of losing, in our rush to become something else." In a world obsessed with moving forward, 'Cop Shiva' reminds us that looking back — at roots, rituals, and relationships — can be just as powerful.

—PTI

Through his lens, BS Shivaraju explores not just performance, but identity and transformation. His series on 'Karaga Jatre', a centuries-old ritual originating in Tamil Nadu but now embedded into Bengaluru's cultural fabric, is one such example ***PHOTO: COP SHIVA/@INSTAGRAM***

Brazil hits back as Trump slaps 50% tariffs

US president cites 'witch hunt' against Bolsonaro; Brazil invokes Economic Reciprocity Law

WASHINGTON/ BRASILIA, 9 JULY

President Donald Trump singled out Brazil for import taxes of 50 per cent on Wednesday for its treatment of its former president, Jair Bolsonaro, signalling that personal grudges rather than simple economics are a driving force in the US leader's use of tariffs. In response, Brazil invoked the newly passed economic reciprocity law.

Trump avoided his standard form letter with Brazil, specifically tying his tariffs to the trial of Bolsonaro, who is charged with trying to overturn his 2022 election loss. Trump has described Bolsonaro as a friend and hosted the former Brazilian president at his Mar-a-Lago resort when both were in power in 2020.

Trump also objected to Brazil's Supreme Court fining of social media companies such as X, saying the temporary blocking last year amounted to "SECRET and UNLAWFUL Censorship Orders." Trump said he is launching an investigation as a result under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, which applies to companies with trade practices that are deemed unfair to US companies.

Former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro, US President Donald Trump and incumbent Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva PHOTO: X

In response, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva invoked the country's Economic Reciprocity Law. He accused Trump of attempting to interfere in the country's internal judicial affairs.

"Brazil is a sovereign nation with independent institutions and will not accept any form of tutelage," Lula stated.

Lula further contested Trump's claims of trade deficits between the two nations. "Statistics from the US government itself show a surplus of $410 billion in the trade of goods and services with Brazil over the past 15 years".

AFRICAN PIVOT

Trump promised West African leaders a pivot from aid to trade during a White House meeting on Wednesday as the region reels from the impact of sweeping US aid cuts.

Trump said he sees "great economic potential in Africa" as the leaders of Liberia, Senegal, Gabon, Mauritania and Guinea-Bissau boasted of their countries' natural resources and heaped praise on the President, including their thanks for his help in settling a long-running conflict between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Trump described the nations represented at the meeting as "all very vibrant places with very valuable land, great minerals, and great oil deposits, and wonderful people". —*PTI*

Micro-drone may kill Trump at Mar-a-Lago: Khamenei's advisor

Mohammad-Javad Larijan, a top advisor to Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei, said that US President Donald Trump "can no longer sunbathe in (Florida's) Mar-a-Lago" as a "micro-drone" may strike him, particularly "in the naval". When asked about the remarks, Trump said "I'm not sure it's a threat actually but perhaps it is", adding that the last time he sunbathed was when he was "about seven years old".

Trump asks Liberian President where he learnt 'such beautiful' English

During his meeting with African leaders, Trump asked Liberian President Joseph Boakai's where he learnt English, following the latter's remarks. "Such good English, such beautiful ..." Trump said. "Where did you learn to speak so beautifully? Where were you educated?"

English is the official language of Liberia. Boakai was inviting investments in his country, saying, "We just want to thank you for this opportunity.

US sanctions UN investigator for Gaza abuse probe

PHOTO: X @ ALBANESE

UNITED NATIONS, 9 JULY

The Trump administration announced Wednesday that it is issuing sanctions against an independent investigator tasked with probing human rights abuses in the Palestinian territories. The State Department's decision to impose sanctions on Francesca Albanese, the UN special rapporteur for the West Bank and Gaza, follows an unsuccessful US pressure campaign to force the international body to remove her from her post. It follows Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to the White House to meet President Donald Trump. "Albanese's campaign of political and economic warfare against the United States and Israel will no longer be tolerated," Secretary of State Marco Rubio posted on social media. —*PTI*

Mid-air collision kills Indian student pilot in Canada

PHOTO: X @ SREEHARISUKESH

OTTAWA, 10 JULY

A mid-air collision in Manitoba has claimed the life of an Indian student pilot, identified as Sreehari Sukesh. The incident occurred when Sukesh's single-engine aircraft collided with a similar plane piloted by Savanna May Royes, a 20-year-old Canadian, while they were practising take-offs and landings near Steinbach, about 50km southeast of Winnipeg. Both pilots were pronounced dead at the scene. The Consulate General of India in Toronto is liaising with Sukesh's family, which has Kerala roots.—*PTI*

EU President survives no confidence vote

BRUSSELS, 10 JULY

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has successfully navigated a vote of no confidence, with a significant majority of EU lawmakers rejecting the motion against her leadership. The motion, which encompassed various allegations, including private communication with Pfizer's CEO during the pandemic, misuse of EU funds, and political interference, garnered 360 votes against it and 175 in favour, with 18 abstentions. Notably, von der Leyen was not present for the vote, which has sparked substantial discussion regarding her leadership and the European People's Party's alliances within the European Parliament. —*PTI*

McDonald's AI hiring bot leaks job-seekers' data

WASHINGTON, 10 JULY

Two US-based security researchers have exposed that a security glitch in McDonald's artificial intelligence-powered hiring system has led to the leak of around 64 million job applicants' personal information, Cybersecuritynews reported on Thursday. Ian Carroll and Sam Curry discovered that McDonald's McHire platform, built by software firm Paradox.ai, suffered from elementary security flaws that allowed hackers to access the databases using the username and password "123456". The leak raises serious concerns about cyber security threats to data protection in AI-driven recruitment systems. McHire relies on AI chatbot "Olivia" to streamline the recruitment process. Olivia handles initial applicant screenings, collects contact information and résumés and directs candidates through assessments.—*Agencies*

A massive dome of flames erupt after a Russian air strike on Kyiv, Ukraine, on Friday PHOTO: PTI

Russia bombs Kyiv with missiles, drones, killing 2

KYIV/ KUALA LUMPUR, 10 JULY

Russia pounded Ukraine's capital with another major missile and drone attack overnight into Thursday, causing fires across the city and killing two people, a day after the heaviest aerial attack of the three-year war so far, according to Ukrainian officials.

At least 13 people were injured, and there were fires in at least five other districts at residential buildings, cars, warehouses, offices and other non-residential structures, said Tymur Tkachenko, head of the Kyiv Regional Administration.

In a post on Telegram, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said rescuers were working at a residential building in Shevchenkivskyi District, after falling debris caused a fire on the top floor of an apartment building. He said three of the injured had shrapnel wounds.

RUBIO MEETS LAVROV

Meanwhie, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said the US and Russia have exchanged new ideas for Ukraine peace talks after he met with his Russian counterpart in Malaysia on Thursday.

"I think it's a new and a different approach," Rubio told reporters after talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. "I wouldn't characterise it as something that guarantees a peace, but it's a concept that, you know, that I'll take back to the president." He didn't elaborate.

Rubio added that President Donald Trump has been "disappointed and frustrated that there's not been more flexibility on the Russian side" to bring about an end to the conflict.

"We need to see a roadmap moving forward about how this conflict can conclude. And then we shared some ideas about what that might look like," he said of the 50-minute meeting. —*PTI*

S Korea issues fresh warrant on Yeol

SEOUL, 10 JULY

A South Korean court early Thursday approved the new arrest of former President Yoon Suk Yeol on charges related to his brief imposition of martial law in December, accepting a special prosecutor's claim that he poses a risk of destroying evidence.

The arrest warrant issued by the Seoul Central District Court sent Yoon back to a detention centre near the capital, four months after his release in March, when the same court overturned his January arrest and allowed him to stand trial for rebellion without being held in custody.

His criminal case is being handled by a team of investigators under special prosecutor Cho Eun-suk who are pursuing additional charges over Yoon's authoritarian push, including obstructing official duties, abuse of power and falsifying official documents.

Cho's team questioned him twice before submitting a request for his arrest warrant to the court on Sunday.

Yoon's lawyers had described the arrest request as excessive and unsubstantiated. They didn't immediately react to the court's decision to approve the arrest of Yoon , who was formally removed from office in April after the Constitutional Court upheld his impeachment. —*PTI*

Hamas agrees to free 10 hostages as Israel kills 70

TEL AVIV, 10 JULY

Hamas says it has agreed to release 10 Israeli captives as part of continuing efforts to reach a ceasefire agreement for the Gaza Strip, but warned that ongoing talks for a truce were "tough" due to Israel's "intransigence". The comments on Wednesday came as Israeli forces killed at least 74 people in Gaza.

Hamas official Taher al-Nunu said they agreed to the latest truce proposal and "offered the necessary flexibility to protect our people and allow the free and dignified entry and flow of aid to our people", reported Al Jazeera.

He said the areas Israeli troops should withdraw to as part of the first phase of a ceasefire had to be drawn up in a way that does not affect Palestinian lives. —*Agencies*

Bangladesh formally indicts Hasina for mass murder

DHAKA, 10 JULY

A special tribunal in Bangladesh on Thursday indicted deposed premier Sheikh Hasina in absentia on charges of crimes against humanity in connection with a deadly crackdown on protesters during the July-August uprising last year.

The International Crimes Tribunal of Bangladesh (ICT-BD) has set 3 August as the date for the trial.

The tribunal has "framed the charge against her (Hasina) alongside the home minister of her regime Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and (the then) inspector general of police Chowdhury Abdullah Al Mamun," a prosecution lawyer told reporters.

The prosecutors said Hasina along with the co-accused was indicted on five charges, including mass killings, murder, and torture to tame the protestors during last year's July-August uprising. —*PTI*

45-year-old Afghan man weds 6-year-old girl

KABUL, 10 JULY

A six-year-old girl was allegedly forced to marry a 45-year-old man in southern Afghanistan's Marjah district after her father sold her for money, reported US-based Afghan channel Amu.tv on Thursday. The man already has two other wives.

A "horrified" Taliban, reportedly tried to prevent the man from taking the child to his home, saying that he could do so when she turns nine years old, the channel reported, though it said it the Taliban authorities have not issued a statement.

- A 'horrified' Taliban, reportedly tried to prevent the man from taking the child to his home, saying that he could do so when she turns nine years old. The girl's father and the groom were arrested

The country currently does not have a legal minimum age for marriage. The earlier norm, which established 16 as the minimum age for girls, has not been restored.

The marriage allegedly involved "walwar" – a customary practice, where the groom sets a price for the bride based on her physical appearance, education and perceived value, the report said.

Hasht-e Subh Daily reported that the girl's father and the groom were arrested, though no formal charges have been filed. The girl is currently with her parents.

There has been a significant increase in child and early marriages in Afghanistan since the Taliban regained control in 2021. —*Agencies*

An image of the marriage ceremony has triggered outrage PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

Red Sea ship attack: Crew likely in rebels' captivity

DUBAI/UN, 10 JULY

Rescuers searched on Thursday for more than a dozen crew members who went missing after Yemen's Houthi rebels sank a ship in the Red Sea as the United States alleged the group may "have kidnapped" those on board.

At least three people also were killed during the hours-long attack on the Greek Eternity C, the EU force previously said,

In a post late Wednesday on the X, the US Embassy in Yemen alleged that the rebels may have taken some of the crew. "We call for their immediate and unconditional safe release," it said.

The Houthis haven't acknowledged taking the crew members. The attack on the Eternity C, as well as the sinking of the bulk carrier Magic Seas after another attack Sunday, represent a new level of violence being employed by the Houthis. —*PTI*

Musk unfollows Trump allies after X CEO quits

NEW YORK, 10 JULY

In a surprising turn of events, Elon Musk unfollowed several prominent allies of President Donald Trump on X, including House Speaker Mike Johnson, former Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi, and Representatives Jim Jordan and Nancy Mace. Musk also severed ties with Fox News.

The unfollowing spree coincided with Linda Yaccarino's announcement of her resignation as CEO of X after two years in the role. While no direct connection between the two events has been confirmed, they have sparked speculation across social media platforms.Musk also said that his new American Party would make it their mission to expose the Epstein client list, which the US government recently said did not exist, after Bodi claimed that it was sitting on her desk.

Yaccarino cited her pride in advancing the platform's mission but did not provide a reason for her departure, which came in the wake of a PR crisis involving antisemitic content shared by Grok, the AI chatbot from Musk's xAI.

—*Agencies*

UNDER GUISE OF BLESSING

Indian priest molests model in Malaysia, hunt on

The model Lishalliny Kanaran PHOTO: X@HYPEMY

KUALA LUMPUR, 10 JULY

An Indian-origin model and television host accused a Hindu priest in Malaysia of molesting her as a "blessing". Lishalliny Kanaran, the winner of Miss Grand Malaysia in 2021, shared the allegations on Instagram. Following the allegations, the Malaysian police have launched a manhunt for the priest, according to the South China Morning Post (SCMP).

The incident occurred last month at Mariamman Temple in Sepang, SCMP reported.

In her Tuesday post, Kanaran alleged that the priest, on the pretext of sprinkling holy water on her, put his hands inside her clothes and molested her.

She recounted how the priest, who typically guided her through rituals, approached her during prayer and offered to bless her with "holy water and a protective string."

- The incident occurred at Mariamman Temple in Sepang. Lishalliny Kanaran posted on Instagram that the priest molested her on the pretext of sprinkling holy water on her

As she finished praying, the priest asked her to she waited for an hour. He then asked her to follow him to his office, where he claimed he would perform the special blessing.

"Even as I followed, something didn't feel right. Something in my gut was uneasy," she wrote.

As he began splashing her face with water, he then allegedly asked her to remove her clothes. She refused, prompting him to say, "What kind of person dresses tight like that?"

"Then, without warning, he put his hands inside my blouse, into my bra, and started touching me inappropriately," she wrote.

The priest then said "This week will be lucky for you".

The suspect is believed to be an Indian national temporarily officiating at the temple during the absence of its resident priest, according to Sepang District Police Chief Norhizam Bahaman, SCMP reported.

Kanaran alleged the ordeal was compounded by threats from the investigating officer, who she claimed warned her against publicising the assault, saying: "If you do, it will be your fault [and] you'll be blamed."

—*Salar News with agencies*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Gold rises ₹250 to ₹98,670/10 g

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Gold prices rose by Rs 250 to Rs 98,670 per 10g in the national capital on Thursday due to renewed buying interest by investors and stockists, according to the All India Sarafa Association. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at Rs 98,420 per 10g on Wednesday. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 200 to Rs 98,200 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). The yellow metal had closed at Rs 98,000 per 10 grams in the previous market session. Meanwhile, silver prices traded flat at Rs 1,04,000 per kg on Thursday. In the international markets, spot gold went up marginally to USD 3,324.40 per ounce. *—PTI*

Rupee rises 4 paise to settle at 85.69 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 10 JULY

The rupee pared initial gains and settled for the day higher by 4 paise at 85.69 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, supported by US-India trade deal optimism, even as domestic equity markets were closed in the negative territory. Forex traders said the Indian rupee ended the day in green against the US dollar amid firm expectations that India and the US will reach a deal soon. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened on a positive note at 85.62 against the US dollar, and traded in a range of 85.69 and 85.53 during the day. The local unit finally settled for the day at 85.69 (provisional), up 4 paise from its previous close. On Wednesday, the rupee closed flat at 85.73 against the US dollar on Wednesday. *—PTI*

Bitcoin price hits record high, nears $1.12K mark

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Bitcoin on Thursday touched an all-time high of USD 1,11,925.38 on improved risk sentiment. This amounts to 39.3 per cent in the value of the world's largest crypto currency in the past three months and over 95.2 per cent in a year.

"The new record high came on improved risk sentiment," IG analyst Tony Sycamore reportedly said. CoinSwitch Markets Desk in its note said, "BTC surged to a new all-time high of $111,925.38. The rally's sustainability depends on macroeconomic factors, especially US trade negotiations and potential Fed rate cuts. Delays or setbacks in trade talks could hinder momentum, while easing inflation and dovish monetary policy may support further gains. BTC ETFs have recorded $507.5 million in inflows so far this week." *—Agencies*

Musk's xAI launches Grok 4 with $300 plan

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The xAI, the AI firm owned by billionaire Elon Musk, on Wednesday night launched its latest flagship Grok 4 along with a USD 300 monthly subscription plan – SuperGrok Heavy. A strong contestant to OpenAI's ChatGPT and Google's Gemini, Grok is capable of analysing images and respond to users' questions. The expectations are high on Grok 4, as OpenAI will soon be releasing GPT-5, likely later this summer.

"With respect to academic questions, Grok 4 is better than PhD level in every subject, no exceptions," said Musk during a livestream on Wednesday night. "At times, it may lack common sense, and it has not yet invented new technologies |or discovered new physics, but that is just a matter of time." *—Agencies*

Sensex wilts 345pts under selling pressure

2,064 stocks decline amid weakness in IT, telecom sectors as 1,959 advance, 138 stay firm

MUMBAI, 10 JULY

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty buckled under selling pressure on Thursday due to weakness in IT and telecom stocks as investors turned cautious ahead of the start of earnings season, with tech major TCS scheduled to announce its Q1 numbers later in the day.

Tariff-related uncertainty also dampened investor sentiment in the market, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 345.80 points or 0.41 per cent to settle at 83,190.28. During the day, it declined 401.11 points or 0.48 per cent to 83,134.97.

On similar lines, the 50-share NSE Nifty declined 120.85 points or 0.47 per cent to 25,355.25.

A positive momentum in global equities, however, restricted the loss in the domestic markets.

Tariff-related uncertainty also dampened investor sentiment in the market, traders said on Thursday *PHOTO: PTI*

From the Sensex pack, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, Infosys, Bharat Electronics, Tech Mahindra and Eternal were major laggards.

However, Maruti, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Trent and Tata Consultancy Services were among the gainers.

As many as 2,064 stocks declined, while 1,959 advanced and 138 remained unchanged on the BSE.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Shanghai's SSE Composite Index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled higher, while Japan's Nikkei 225 index ended lower.

European markets were trading mostly higher.

The US markets ended in positive territory on Wednesday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 77 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.27 per cent to USD 70 a barrel.

On Wednesday, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell by 176.43 points or 0.21 per cent to settle at 83,536.08. The Nifty declined 46.40 points or 0.18 per cent to end at 25,476.10. *—PTI*

TCS net profit rises 6% to ₹12,760 cr in April–June

MUMBAI, 10 JULY

Country's largest IT services company TCS on Thursday reported a 6 per cent rise in its June quarter net profit at Rs 12,760 crore.

The Tata group company had posted a net profit of Rs 12,040 crore in the corresponding period last year.

The company's revenue inched up by 1.3 per cent to Rs 63,437 crore from Rs 62,613 crore in the year-ago period, but was down 3 per cent on a constant currency perspective.

Its operating profit margin expanded 0.30 per cent on-quarter to 24.5 per cent in the April-June period, as per a company statement.

"The continued global macro-economic and geopolitical uncertainties caused a demand contraction," its managing director and chief executive K Krithivasan said.

It reported new deal signings of USD 9.4 billion during the quarter, while the overall headcount was at 6,13,069 at the end of the quarter, up by over 6,000 on-year.

The company scrip had closed 0.06 per cent down at Rs 3,382.30 apiece on the BSE, as against a 0.41 per cent correction on the benchmark. *—PTI*

Govt to sell minority stake in LIC

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The government is working on further stake sale in Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) and the disinvestment department would work out finer details of the transaction, sources said.

The government currently holds 96.5 per cent stake in LIC. It had sold 3.5 per cent through an initial public offering (IPO) in May 2022 at a price band of Rs 902-949 a share. The share sale fetched the government around Rs 21,000 crore.

Sources said the government has given its approval for further share sale in LIC through the OFS route and the discussions are still in the nascent stage.

"It is up to the disinvestment department to look at the market condition and conclude the stake sale," a source said

The government needs to offload another 6.5 per cent stake in the public sector life insurer to meet the mandated 10 per cent public shareholding requirement by May 16, 2027.

PHOTO: PTI

The quantum of stake sale, price and timing would be decided in due course, the source added. LIC's current market capitalisation stands at Rs 5.85 lakh crore.

Shares of LIC were trading at Rs 924.40 apiece, down 2.27 per cent over the previous close on the BSE. *—PTI*

LPG losses: Govt mulls ₹35,000cr subsidy to oil cos

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The government is likely to give a subsidy of Rs 30,000-35,000 crore to state-run oil companies – Indian Oil Corporation, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum – to compensate for losses incurred from selling LPG at below cost over the past 15 months, according to a senior official.

The finance ministry is working out the exact under-recovery or loss incurred and the mechanism to compensate it, he said.

In the Union Budget for 2025-26 fiscal (April 2025–March 2026) presented on February 1, the government has made no provision to compensate for the under-recoveries. However, in April, the government raised excise duty on petrol and diesel to garner additional Rs 32,000 crore in revenues.

This additional revenue is what the finance ministry may use to compensate for LPG under-recoveries. *—PTI*

NEW RECORD IN INDIA

SBI mulls ₹25,000cr share sale as early as next week

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

India's largest lender by assets – State Bank of India - is preparing to sell as much as Rs 25,000 crore (USD 2.9 billion) of shares to institutional investors as early as next week, according to people familiar with the matter.

If successful, this qualified institutional placement (QIP) would set a new record in India, exceeding Coal India's Rs 22,560 crore sale in 2015.

If and when it takes place, it would be the nation's biggest deal of its kind. If successful, this Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) would set a new record in India, exceeding Coal India's Rs 22,560 crore sale in 2015.

However, according to reports, SBI hasn't finalised its plans and the value of shares being sold might change.

PHOTO: ANI

The sale is expected to help the bank's plans to support loan growth, strengthen its balance and ensure it meets regulatory requirements.

Notably, it's the first time since 2017 the government owned bank has tapped into the equity market.

Half of the SBI's 2017 share sale worth Rs 15,000 crore through the QIP route was snapped up by LIC, which now owns 9.4 cent of the bank, making it the largest shareholder after the government that owns 57.43 per cent.

The fundraise decision is aimed at boosting its common equity tier 1 capital, which in the March 2025 quarter was only 11 per cent, the lowest among public sector lenders. *—Agencies*

Canara Bank withdraws fraud tag on Anil's loan account

MUMBAI, 10 JULY

- On 8 November, 2024, the bank classified the loan account as "fraud" for reasons including that a Rs 1,050 crore loan extended in 2017 was "routed" to a group company to pay other liabilities to connected parties. The order was based on the RBI's master circular related to fraud accounts that laid guidelines for such declarations. The bench said the withdrawal order shall be informed to the RBI

The Canara Bank on Thursday informed the Bombay High Court that it has withdrawn its order classifying as "fraudulent" the loan account of a firm linked to industrialist Anil Ambani.

After the bank's disclosure, a bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Neela Gokhale disposed of the petition filed by Ambani challenging the bank's order, saying nothing survives in it.

The bench said the withdrawal order shall be informed to the Reserve Bank of India.

The loan account concerned Ambani's firm Reliance Communi cations, which is undergoing insolvency proceedings.

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The order was based on the RBI's master circular related to fraud accounts that laid guidelines for such declarations.

In February this year, the HC stayed the order pending hearing of the plea.

At the time, the HC had questioned whether the RBI would take action against banks that have repeatedly defied its master circular and the Supreme Court's ruling, which mandates that borrowers must be given a hearing before their accounts are declared "fraudulent".

Ambani had challenged the Canara Bank's order, arguing that he was not given a hearing before the bank's action. *—PTI*

Meta hires Apple's AI Chief for $200M

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Amid raging war in artificial intelligence (AI), Meta has poached Ruoming Pang, who had headed the artificial intelligence models team at Apple, and made him part of its new "superintelligence" group, Bloomberg reported.

The report said Meta offered Pang a package worth more than USD 200 million dollars, and Apple let him go. Nobody at Apple gets such a massive package, except for CEO Tim Cook. This shows Meta's zeal in leading the AI race. Meta has also brought in big names like former GitHub CEO Nat Friedman, AI founder Daniel Gross and Scale AI's Alexandr Wang, who is now Meta's chief AI officer. Meanwhile, industry insiders revealed that while the actual cash includes a base salary and a joining bonus, most of the compensation offered to the big names is tied to Meta's stock.

- Meta has also brought in big names like former GitHub CEO Nat Friedman, AI founder Daniel Gross and Scale AI's Alexandr Wang, who is now Meta's chief AI officer

However, the catch is that the full payout will depend on how well Meta performs over time. It may take years and employees have to help meet specific goals to receive the full package. *—Agencies*

Nvidia 5% away from crossing India's GDP

SAN FRANCISCO, 9 JULY

US chipmaker Nvidia Corporation, the first company to reach a USD 4 trillion market valuation, is now so large that a mere 5 per cent rise in its stock price would make it more valuable than the entire Indian economy. The IMF has estimated India's GDP at USD 4.2 trillion and expects it to touch UDS 4.27 trillion by the end of 2025.

Nvidia on Wednesday became the first publicly traded company to surpass a USD 4 trillion market valuation, riding on the investor frenzy surrounding an Artificial Intelligence (AI) boom powered by its industry-leading processors.

The milestone reflects the upheaval over AI, which is widely viewed as the biggest tectonic shift in technology since Apple co unveiled the first iPhone 18 years ago.

Underscoring the changing of the guard, Nvidia is now worth USD 900 billion more than Apple. *—PTI*

Musk's AI firm deletes Grok posts praising Hitler

SAN FRANCISC, 10 JULY

Elon Musk's AI company xAI has deleted several "inappropriate" posts made by its chatbot, Grok, after it responded to user prompts with antisemitic comments and praise for Adolf Hitler. In multiple now-deleted posts, Grok referred to itself as "MechaHitler," made antisemitic remarks, and implied a Jewish surname was linked to hateful activism. One post stated, "Hitler would have called it out and crushed it," while another claimed, "The white man stands for innovation, grit and not bending to PC nonsense."

After backlash, xAI said it is working to remove hate speech and is updating Grok to improve training. The company restricted Grok's responses to images for a time, blaming an "earlier model iteration" for the comments,

which it called an "unacceptable error."

Computer science professor Talia Ringer suggested the controversy may be tied to the soft launch of Grok 4, which Musk claims is capable of postgraduate-level reasoning. She warned that retraining is likely needed, as tweaks alone won't fix such issues.

The Anti-Defamation League condemned the incident as "dangerous and antisemitic." Musk later suggested users may have manipulated Grok into making the statements. *—Agencies*

TARGETS ZEPTO, BLINKIT

Amazon starts 10-min delivery in Delhi

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

Amazon has joined Zepto, Blinkit and Instamart in promising delivery of ordered items in as little as ten minutes to customers in New Delhi.

The e-commerce platform on Thursday extended its 'Now' service to the national capital, making it only the second city after Bengaluru to get the fast delivery feature in Amazon.

This puts Amazon in direct competition in Delhi in direct competition with its local rivals like Zomato-owned Blinkit and Swiggy-owned Instamart, according to Bloomberg.

The decision to expand seems to have come after testing the waters in Bengaluru and receiving a positive response.

In a statement released on Thursday, Amazon said it was "excited by the initial customer response and positive feedback" for the service in Bengaluru.

PHOTO: ANI

₹ 64,000 cr is the estimated value of goods Indians ordered from quick-commerce platforms such as Blinkit and Instamart in FY25

"Based on this, we're now expanding the service over the next few months," it added.

With the urban consumers wanting reliable and fast delivery, the 'Quick commerce' or 'Q-commerce' has taken off in India with more players, including global e-commerce giants joining the bandwagon.

India has always been a key growth factor for Amazon, even as the e-commerce giant has been steadiy increasing its investment in the country.

In July 2025, Amazon announced another Rs 1,943 crore (about USD 233 million) investment, looking to expand its delivery network and build its infrastructure. *—Agencies*

Indian Open Para Athletics C'ship in B'luru on 11-12 July

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

Two-time Paralympic gold-medallist javelin thrower Sumit Antil will headline the Indian Open Para Athletics Championships, the final qualifying event for the September's World Para Athletics Championships, beginning at the iconic Kanteerava Stadium here on Friday. Over 262 Indian para-athletes will compete for top honours at the two-day championship, which will serve as the final selection platform for the Indian contingent heading to the World Para Athletics Championships, scheduled to be held in New Delhi. Apart from Antil, Praveen Kumar (High Jump, T44), two-time Paralympic silver medallist Yogesh Kathuniya (Discus Throw, F56), Dharambir Nain (Club Throw, F51), Rinku Hooda (Javelin Throw, F46), and Simran (100m & 200m, T12) will be in action.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@BENASKREN

Wrestler Ben recovers post lung transplant

MILWAUKEE, 10 JULY

Former Olympic wrestler and MMA star Ben Askren, who has been hospitalized in Wisconsin after a severe case of pneumonia, said in a post on social media Wednesday that he had undergone a double lung transplant and is in recovery. Askren said during the Instagram video that he recalls very little of what happened over a monthlong stretch from late May through the first two days of July. His wife, Amy, had said in a series of social media posts that Askren was put on a ventilator in June and placed on the donor list for a lung transplant on 24 June. "No recollection, zero idea, no idea what happened," Askren said of most of the past six weeks. "I just read through my wife's journal. It's like a movie. It's ridiculous. I only died four times, where the ticker stopped for about 20 seconds." —*PTI*

Pant cops a blow on finger; Jurel substitutes

ST. GALLEN, 10 JULY

Indian wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant walked off the field with a finger injury during the first day's play between the third Test against England at Lord's on Thursday. Pant copped a blow on his fingertip while attempting to get his hands to a Jasprit Bumrah delivery that was fired down legside. The Delhi 'keeper attempted to continue behind the wickets after some medical intervention but was visibly wincing in pain. Eventually, Dhruv Jurel was brought in to take up the gloves. England has breached the three-figure mark for the loss of two wickets with Joe and Ollie Pope putting up a 50-run partnership.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@NORGAARD

Arsenal signs Brentford captain Christian Norgaard

DUBAI, 10 JULY

Arsenal confirmed the signing of Christian Norgaard from Brentford on Thursday to strengthen the midfield following the close-season departures.Financial details were not disclosed, but British media reports said Arsenal paid an initial fee of 10 million pounds ($13.60 million) to sign the 31-year-old Denmark international on a two-year deal with an option for a third year. "He is an international player with a wealth of experience in the Premier League. He has proven leadership skills and a strong character.—*PTI*

India women win first-ever T20I series against England

Harmanpreet credits WPL experience for team's improvement

MANCHESTER, 10 JULY

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur has credited the Women's Premier League (WPL) for helping her players gather the experience needed to execute strategies at the international level after their series-clinching triumph over England in an ongoing T20 International rubber.

India registered a dominant six-wicket win in the fourth T20I to seal their first-ever women's T20I series victory against England.

With the win on Tuesday, the visitors have taken an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-match series.

The desire to 'create something big' played a pivotal role in India winning their first-ever women's T20I series against England, said Radha Yadav, who played a key part in the historic triumph with her spin bowling.

The left-arm spin pair of Radha (2/15) and Shree Charani (2/30) and the experienced Deepti Sharma (1/29) combined to claim five wickets, restricting the hosts to a modest 126 for 7, which India chased down with ease to take an unassailable 3-1 lead in the five-match series on Wednesday.

"The belief and the dedication this time are different. I don't know about the past, but this time, this team, this atmosphere (it's) magical.

We want to create something big going forward as well," said Radha, who looked sharp in the field as well.

The left-arm spinner added that though the team still has to improve in certain areas, it is determined to dominate at all costs.

"This (domination) is the path we want to go. Still a lot of things we have to correct; we have that in our minds. But, yeah, this is a different team, and we are going to dominate no matter what.

"We started focusing on controlling the controllables. Like, if we are bowling, we have to focus on that, and if we are fielding, we have to focus on those particular balls, and batting-wise, we are doing so well. But, particularly, bowling and fielding set the tone for us." She added that paying more attention to fielding and bowling has shown results.

Indian women celebrating the first-ever T20I series win against England, and Player of the match Radha Yadav **PHOTO: PTI**

WE WANT TO CREATE SOMETHING BIG: RADHA

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Off-spinner Shreyanka Patil and pacer Titas Sadhu continued to chart their way back from injuries as they were included in the India A squad on Thursday to tour Australia for a multi-format away series next month.

India 127 for 4 (Mandhana 32, Shafali 31, Rodrigues 27*) beat England 126 for 7 (Dunkley 22, Radha 2-15, Charani 2-30) by six wickets. —*PTI*

LEGEND HONOURED

Sachin's portrait unveiled at Lord's MCC museum

LONDON, 10 JULY

A portrait of the legendary Sachin Tendulkar was unveiled in the MCC Museum at Lord's before the start of the third Test between India and England here on Thursday.

The portrait, which has been painted by Stuart Pearson Wright from a photograph taken by the artist at his home 18 years ago, will remain in the MCC Museum until later this year and will then be relocated to the Pavilion. "As the work progressed, so did Pearson Wright's approach, eventually ending with oil on abraded aluminium. The abstract background illustrates Tendulkar's timelessness, unrestricted by any era or specific location," a release said. Pearson Wright has previously painted portraits of Kapil Dev, Bishan Singh Bedi, and Dilip Vengsarkar. Tendulkar was quoted as saying, "It's a huge honour. In 1983, when India won the World Cup, it was my first introduction to Lord's."

"I saw our captain, Kapil Dev, lift the trophy. That moment sparked my cricketing journey. Today, with my portrait going up inside the Pavilion, it feels like it's come full circle. When I reflect on my career, it brings a smile to my face. This is truly special." "Unlike the previous paintings, which were full-length, the portrait of Tendulkar is a larger-than-life image of his head and shoulders," the release added. "The Lord's Portrait Programme has been running in its current form for three decades, but MCC has been collecting art and artefacts since the Victorian period, opening a dedicated museum in the 1950s, making it the oldest sporting museum in Europe.

"The Long Room Gallery is the oldest and most iconic gallery in sport. The Club currently houses around 3,000 pictures, nearly 300 of which are portraits."Pearson Wright said: "It was clear that MCC didn't want this portrait to be in the same format as the previous Indian cricket portraits I made, so a fresh approach was taken with this one." —*PTI*

Sachin Tendulkar's portrait unveiled at Lord's MCC museum **PHOTO: PTI**

PSG thrash Real Madrid 4-0

LONDON, 10 JULY

Paris Saint-Germain are the best men's football team in the world. Yes, we know they still have to get past Chelsea in Sunday's FIFA Club World Cup final to officially be crowned world champions, but the Opta Power Rankings don't need that to place PSG top of the charts.Following their 4-0 thrashing of Real Madrid in Wednesday's semi-final at MetLife Stadium,

Luis Enrique's side leapfrogged Liverpool into first place in the Opta Power Rankings. For those unaware, the Opta Power Rankings are a global team ranking system that assigns an ability score to over 10,000 men's domestic football teams and over 2,000 women's domestic football teams on a scale between zero and 100, where zero is the worst-ranked team in the world and 100 is the best team in the world.Liverpool went top in late November and pretty much stayed there until Wednesday, when PSG took over. —*PTI*

CLUB WORLD CUP

Lionel Messi sets MLS record

DUBAI, 10 JULY

Lionel Messi scored a pair of goals to give Inter Miami enough offence to outlast New England and secure a 2-1 victory over the host Revolution on Wednesday night at Foxborough, Massachusetts.

He became the first player in league history to score multiple goals in four consecutive

MLS contests, all wins. Messi increased his total goals for the season to 14 and scored his 19th and 20th goals across all competitions this season.

Inter Miami (10-3-5, 35 points) won its second consecutive match and moved up to fifth place in the Eastern Conference standings. New England (6-8-6, 24 points) lost its second in a row and is winless in its past five matches.Messi followed up his impressive performance in a 4-1 victory last Saturday against Montreal and has four goals and an assist since the team resumed MLS league play following a Round of 16 finish on 29 June in the FIFA Club World Cup. —*PTI*

Tennis player shot dead by father in Gurugram

GURUGRAM, 10 JULY

State-level tennis player Radhika Yadav was allegedly shot dead by her father on Thursday at their double-storeyed home in upscale Sushant Lok here, police said.

The 25-year-old, who was shot in the back while cooking, died on the spot, officials said.

Her father, 49-year-old Deepak Yadav, has been arrested and his .32 bore licensed pistol recovered from his possession, they said. Why he did so is still unclear.

The father allegedly fired more than five bullets.

Her mother was on the ground floor, and Radhika, who played tennis for Haryana, was in the kitchen on the first floor when the crime took place, officials said.

A police team reached the house and took the body into custody.

"We are questioning the family members. A probe is underway, and the picture will be clear soon," said Inspector Vinod Kumar, SHO of the Sector 56 police station.

The family lives in Sushant Lok-Phase 2, Sector 57. The father, police said, is a resident of Wazirabad village. —*PTI*

India A hockey team beats Ireland 6-0 on European tour

EINDHOVEN, 10 JULY

The India A men's hockey team continued its dominant run on the European tour, inflicting a crushing 6-0 defeat on Ireland at the Hockey Club Oranje-Rood here.

This is the second successive win for India A against Ireland, whom they beat 6-1 in the tour opener. Uttam Singh opened the scoring for India A, following which captain Sanjay made it 2-0. Midfielder Mohammed Raheel Mouseen then scored impressive back-to-back goals, followed by a goal each by Amandeep Lakra and Varun Kumar as India A gave a good account of themselves. They will next play France on Saturday. Coach Shivendra Singh said the team will look to build on the fine performances against Ireland when they take on France.

"We've had two good matches against Ireland, and I'm happy with how the players are shaping up. We'll play the French team next and hopefully deliver an equally impressive performance," he said. —*PTI*

HI announces probable list for national camp

BENGALURU, 10 JULY

Hockey India on Thursday named a 33-member core probable group for the senior men's national coaching camp to be held at the SAI Centre here from 14 July till 7 August.

The upcoming camp is crucial for the Indian team as it gears up for two major international assignments, the Australia tour and the all-important Hero Asia Cup in Rajgir, scheduled to take place from 29 August to 7 September.

The winner of the Asia Cup will earn direct qualification for next year's FIH men's World Cup to be co-hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands from 14 to 30 August

But it has been learnt that chief coach Craig Fulton will take into consideration the performances of India 'A' players, at least for the tour of Australia scheduled from August 8 to 22 in Perth.

The midfield features a balance of youth and experience, comprising Raj Kumar Pal, Nilakanta Sharma, Hardik Singh, Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh, Poovanna Chandura Boby, Rajinder Singh, Vishnu Kant Singh, Manpreet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, and Shamsher Singh. The forward line has plenty of firepower with Gurjant Singh, Abhishek, Shilanand Lakra, Aditya Arjun Lalage, Selvam Karthi, Mandeep Singh, Dilpreet Singh. —*PTI*

AMANDA SINKS SABALENKA, ENTERS FIRST WIMBLEDON FINAL

LONDON, 10 JULY

American tennis star Amanda Anisimova has reached her maiden Grand Slam final on grass by defeating world number one Aryna Sabalenka in a thrilling three-set semifinal at Wimbledon 2025.

Anisimova, with grit and composure, overcame Sabalenka with a 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 victory to book her place in Saturday's women's singles final.

This marks Anisimova's first-ever Wimbledon final, also first first-ever any grand slam final, and one of the biggest wins of her career. On the other hand, Sabalenka, who was hoping to reach her first Wimbledon final after previous semifinal exits in 2021 and 2023, once again fell short on grass despite a strong start to the match.

Anisimova has become the youngest American woman to reach the Wimbledon singles final since Serena Williams in 2004. Back then, Serena fell to Maria Sharapova - and now, Anisimova has a chance to go all the way. —*PTI*

WORST IN NINE YEARS

India crash to lowest FIFA ranking

NEW DELHI, 10 JULY

The Indian men's football team slumped to its lowest ranking in nine years as it dropped six places to 133rd in the FIFA chart issued on Thursday, courtesy of two losses in June.

India lost to Thailand (0-2) in an international friendly on June 4 before suffering a defeat to lower-ranked Hong Kong (0-1) in an Asian Cup qualifying round match, leading to head coach Manolo Marquez's parting of ways with the All India Football Federation (AIFF).

The last time the Indian team had a worse ranking was in December 2016 when it was

placed at 135. India's best-ever ranking was 94 in February 1996. The Indian team currently has 1113.22 rating points as against 1132.03 previously. It occupies the 24th place among 46 Asian countries, led by Japan (17th rank).

Nothing has been going right for the Indian men's team. The loss against Hong Kong has put the side in a difficult position in its bid to qualify for the 2027 Asian Cup.

The team logged just one win from its last eight matches under Marquez's tutelage, the lone victory coming against the Maldives in March.

This year, India has so far played four matches, out of which they have won one, drawn another, and lost two. The poor results prompted the return of former skipper and iconic striker Sunil Chhetri to the squad, but that has done little to improve the team's fortunes.

India's next scheduled international match is an away fixture against Singapore in the third round of Asian Cup qualifiers in October. —*PTI*